

of Virginia in a single particular, and no man in the Senate of the United States has been more diligent, prompt, energetic, able, and intrepid in defending the principles, maintaining the interests, and asserting the rights of the people of Virginia. It is, indeed, *suspected* that in his zeal for the county he has not been sufficiently mindful of the interests of his party. It is thought, that in resisting the behests of the Executive, he has been more devoted to the duties he owes to his constituents, the people of Virginia, than to promoting the triumph and adding to the power and importance of the President. "The head and front of his offending hath this extent, no more." Many of those, who, with Pharisaical humility, claimed to be the especial representatives of the Republican party in the Legislature, declared that they did not oppose the re-election of Mr. Rives in consequence of his difference of opinion with them and the President on the leading measure of the Administration, the Sub-Treasury expedient. Indeed it has been announced, *ex cathedra*, by the organ of the "sink or swim" party, in Virginia, that Mr. Rives would have received the united support of that party, notwithstanding his hostility to the course of Administration on the subject of the finances, provided they could have been satisfied he would have supported the Administration in all other things.

Whether such a pledge, under any circumstances, would have been consistent with the character of a Virginian senator, and proper to be required by the Legislature, or any part of it, as the condition of their support, we will refer to the judgment of the Public. We are confident that no man, properly imbued with the spirit of freedom, or duly impressed with the sacred duties, and solemn responsibilities of a representative of the sovereign state of Virginia, in the senate of the United States, would ever require such a pledge, or justify any man aspiring to that station, in making it.

We trust that the Senate of the United States will never be humbled into the condition of a mere political junto to register the edicts of the President, and instead of being, as it was designed by its organization, the guardian of the rights of the States in their sovereign capacity, degraded into a mere privy council of the Executive, acquiescing in his demands with the humble submission of an eastern Divan to the orders of an Asiatic despot. We are satisfied that many of those who raised the objection we are now considering, would revolt at the imputation that they wished or demanded any such humiliating debasement; and yet the avowals of what would have been sufficient to have secured their support and the known spirit of the opposition to Mr. Rives, inevitably lead to such degradation of the Senate. No declaration of principle was required of him. His opinions, in regard to all the great questions of constitutional construction and practical expediency, had been long known and approved by the Republican party of Virginia.

It may be well to add, as an instructive fact in the history of the late contest, that these same self-styled *Simon Pures* of Democracy, who pride themselves in nursing their wrath against the United States Bank, publicly proclaim, that the Sub-Treasury is a question of minor importance, and the great issue presented to the country is Bank or no Bank—that the former is a question of expediency only, while the latter involves a constitutional principle of the utmost magnitude and importance. With these professions constantly upon their lips, it is impossible we can close our eyes to the glaring inconsistency in which their conduct involves them. Numerous and conclusive proofs might be adduced to show, that those who, like ourselves, utterly repudiate a National Bank, as both unconstitutional and inexpedient, but who are inimical to the Sub-Treasury, are viewed by the friends of the latter measure with

infinitely greater suspicion and distrust than the open and avowed advocates of a Bank of the United States ; but there are one or two so directly connected with the subject of this address, that we cannot omit inviting your particular attention to them. The uniform hostility of Mr. Rives to the incorporation of a National Bank, at all times and under all circumstances, is so universally known to the people of Virginia, that no man has ventured to express a doubt upon the subject ; and yet in the late Senatorial election, a portion of the friends of the Administration in the House of Delegates, including two of the most distinguished members of that party, recorded their votes for Mr. Chapman Johnson—a gentleman, it is true, of eminent talents, and great private worth, but the known and decided advocate of the re-charter of the U. S. Bank, and who has differed with the present and late Administrations upon almost every question of principle or expediency, whether practical or theoretical. It is equally notorious that a large portion of these straight-laced Republicans, did at one time meditate bringing forward, and openly avowed their readiness to sustain, in preference to Mr. Rives, the President of the Court of Appeals, with all the sins of the Bank, and internal improvements by the general Government, unexpiated and unatoned for, except by the support of the present financial scheme of Mr. Van Buren. And that, when the Van Buren Convention assembled, containing as it did, a “large infusion” of representative purity, “fresh from the people,” they unanimously, with characteristic consistency, called this same distinguished gentleman to preside over the deliberations of this newly-christened “Democratic Republican States Right” party. These examples are sufficient to show how little confidence can be reposed in the professions of a disposition on the part of the supporters of the Sub-Treasury, to treat that question as one of subordinate importance to the

Bank question, or to regard a difference of opinion with them, on that subject, as furnishing no sufficient ground for withholding from its opponents their countenance and support. But it is idle to reason upon this subject, when there are none so blind as not to see the plain and palpable proofs which are every day presented to us, of the settled and deliberate purpose of the friends of this measure to make it the test of political orthodoxy [See Note A.]

The opinion is becoming almost universal, that there is no necessity for the establishment of a National Bank to regulate the currency or administer the finances of the country. The system of internal improvements by the general Government, seems by common consent, to be abandoned, and the controversy about the tariff for protection has been, it is hoped, terminated by the celebrated Compromise Act of 1833. Should any of these measures be at any time unfortunately revived, we have the most abundant guarantees for his future course in regard to them, in the uniform coincidence of opinion in past times, between Mr. Rives and the people of Virginia, and in his zealous and harmonious co-operation with them in opposing these unconstitutional and dangerous stretches of power. Indeed, we may boldly challenge the opponents of Mr. Rives, of whatever hue and shade of political complexion, to point out one single prominent measure of Government, on which he was required to act at any time since he came into public life, in which, as a representative, he has not faithfully reflected the public sentiment of the State, and discharged his duty to the satisfaction of the Republicans of Virginia. In respect to no measure, has he more unquestionably been a faithful representative of the opinions and interests of his own State, than upon what was termed by the Republicans, in 1834, "that odious Federal conception," the Sub-Treasury scheme. He has, with unflinching steadiness and

undaunted firmness, resisted the thrice-repeated attempt to enlarge executive power and put into the hands of the President the means of corruption, disclosed in a manner calculated to alarm the Republicans of the old Dominion, and "indicating a hostility to State institutions, which augured badly for the rights of the States." In this he has considerably and steadily "walked in the footsteps of the illustrious predecessor" of Mr. Van Buren, and maintained the position which in common with the whole Republican party, and indeed in common with almost the entire body of the Opposition party, he occupied in 1835. [See Note B.]

For what, then, is he to be immolated? Is it because he has been faithful to his principles, or not sufficiently submissive to party? Is it because his political morality is not sufficiently elastic, to enable him to turn a somersault at the word of command? Is it that he prefers the service and approbation of this good old Commonwealth, to all the rank and station which power can bestow, and will not "bend the pregnant hinges of the knee, that thrift may follow fawning"? Or is it that, like Aristides, he is to be ostracised for his very virtues? There are some, probably, who feel that the daily beauty and integrity of his life and conversation make them ugly, and who like the hump-backed tyrant, view him as a "spider in their path, and would have it crushed." He gloried in the proud character of a Virginian senator, conscious that he was honestly and truly discharging the responsible duties of his station, and he manfully scorned to make pledges calculated to destroy the moral force of his opposition to measures which he deemed revolutionary, disorganizing and demoralizing, and fraught with the most pernicious consequences to the prosperity of the country. We see those calling themselves Republicans, although they approve the Sub-Treasury, avowing their readiness to give him their support, if he would give assurances for future party

devotion to the administration—when the humiliating and almost disgusting spectacle is exhibited, of men who agree with him in condemning the Sub-Treasury as pernicious and who have been cheering him on in opposing it, yet demanding his expulsion from the senate with all the violence of “tone to hatred turned,” only because he will not pledge himself to sustain the *future* acts of the administration, and promise in advance to “sink or swim” with Martin Van Buren; when we find the ultra-partisans of the Whig party requiring proofs of his party devotion to the interests of the opposition, as the condition of their support; when we see all these things, are we not fully justified in asserting that the great question, the vital principle, involved in this contest is, whether the Senate of the United States should be reduced to a mere instrument to accomplish the purposes and execute the will of the Executive of whatever party may be in the ascendant? He so regarded it. And so viewing it, the contest swelled immensely beyond a question of preference for William C. Rives for his superior talents and political orthodoxy; it became of infinitely more consequence than the defeat of the Sub-Treasury project, destructive as we believe that measure to be in a political, economical and financial view. It became a great question of political ethics, reaching to the foundations of the edifice of civil liberty. It involves the stability of the pillars on which our Republican institutions rest. Let it be once established as the recognised and cardinal canon of party fidelity, that no politician shall oppose the will of his partizan chief, or stubbornly refuse to accompany his opposition with professions of future support, and continued allegiance, without being shot for desertion, or branded with ignominy as an apostate, and it is obvious, that all political responsibility of the President is at an end, and every barrier to the possession of absolute power is thrown down. Representative independence and fidelity

to the people are converted into treason to the Executive, and although the externals of a Republican Government may, for awhile, be preserved, we shall have established in substance, an elective despotism in its worst form. The President, from being a servant of the people, and subject, through their organized agents, to constant control and restraint, will have become an irresponsible monarch. The Representatives of the State and of the people deserting the high function and duty of "eternal vigilance" upon his conduct, will be bound, at the hazard of being exposed to the most unsparing reprobation, as deserters and apostates, to become his apologists and flatterers, aiding and abetting him in each new encroachment upon the constitution or outrage upon the principles of free governments. As Republicans—as Freemen—as Virginians, we renounce and repudiate all such servility. As Representatives, we felt that we would have betrayed the trust confided to us, if we could have consented to aid in any act which would have sanctioned it.—[See Note C.]

Why should a Senator of Virginia be desired to give any opinion, or express any preference as to who ought to be elected President of the United States two years hence? What has he to do in his character of Senator with the election of President? Nothing—*emphatically nothing*. As an individual citizen he may give his own suffrage as every other citizen gives his, for that individual whose election, under all the circumstances, will be most likely to advance the prosperity of the country: no matter who is elected, the Senator, if he be honest and independent, will sustain the measures and recommendations of the President, so far as they are, in his judgment, consonant to the interests and honour of the country, and the principles of the State he represents.

The seductive influences and corrupting tendencies of an overgrown and constantly increasing Executive

patronage, are sufficiently potent in subduing the spirit and weakening the independence and fidelity of the representatives of the States and the people. Let us take care how we do anything to require them to manifest an obsequious and deferential submission to the Executive will, as the only passport to popular favour. We believe that, under the circumstances of the case, the refusal of Virginia to sustain Mr. Rives in his present position would go far, very far, to infuse such a spirit amongst the representatives of the people. The State of Virginia has ever exerted a powerful moral influence in the administration of the affairs of the general Government. It has ever been her boast that she adhered to certain great principles, and sustained her public men so long as they were faithful to those principles, no matter from what quarter they were assailed. The time has never been, when, in the patriotic and eloquent language of Mr. Rives, she did not expect her representatives to remember "*that they had a country to serve as well as a party to obey.*"

It was, we believe, from a conviction that the great Conservative principle of representative fidelity and independence was about being cloven down, and that a servile spirit of undeviating acquiescence in the opinions and wishes of party leaders, would be fostered, by permitting Mr. Rives to fall a victim to the furious and vindictive resentment of remorseless partisans, that induced many of the most influential of the Whig party in the Legislature to prefer his election to that of any man in the Commonwealth. It was the same persuasion, strengthened by the disclosures of the feeling of peculiar zeal and anxiety exhibited by the Sub-Treasury democrats, to defeat him, and even to prefer any one (Whig or Tory) to him, that finally reconciled almost the entire body of the Whig party to unite with us in endeavouring to re-elect Mr. Rives. With the course of the fragment of that party who refused to co-operate

with the rest of their brethren, and thus prevented his election, we have nothing to do. We shall not even impute to them the *responsibility* of defeating the election, however justified we might be by a portion of that squad who, with remarkable *modesty*, have made a similar charge against the Conservatives.

The support thus given by the Whig party to Mr. Rives, affords honourable testimony, that many of them were willing to forego a mere party triumph in the support of so important a principle as Senatorial independence. And why should we or Mr. Rives have any repugnance to such aid from the Whigs? For ourselves, we avow our willingness to derive support from any quarter, in checking the extravagant and pernicious measures of any party, in restraining its excesses, preventing the abuses which it may run into, and preserving the ancient and approved principles of the Republican party from being overwhelmed by the wild spirit of rash innovation, and the mad projects of radicalism and agrarianism.

Who are these Whigs, [See Note B.] that contaminate by their support and assistance? They are our fellow-citizens, comprising nearly one half of the population of the State, and embracing a full proportion of its virtue, intelligence and patriotism. It is true, that they, like their rival contemporaries, the Democrats, have in their ranks numbers of every variety of complexion, from the rankest nullifier, and Ultra State Rights men, down to the most uniform and consistent consolidationists. If every man were obstinately to refuse to support for public office only those who agreed with him in every opinion, it is obvious that no public man ever could be elected, and no popular Government ever could exist. We have already shown that there was a great political principal involved in the re-election of Mr. Rives, which appealed with irresistible force to those Whigs who

had been accustomed to denounce the Administration party for its proscriptive spirit and for the blind and submissive devotion it was charged with exacting from its members. Besides the issue really was between Mr. Rives and a Sub-Treasury democrat, and it is amazing how any Whig really sincere in his professions of opposition to the financial schemes of the Executive could hesitate to sustain the most zealous, the most able, and the most efficient opponent of that system. Indeed, we believe that there is but a moiety of the "forlorn hope" of fourteen, who are opposed to the Sub-Treasury *principle*.

The great body of the Whig party, therefore, as well as the Conservatives, had sufficient and manifest reasons of public duty, and obvious considerations of high political principle, to unite them in sustaining the election of Mr. Rives. We think every true patriot, every real republican, in fact as well as in name, had presented to him the most cogent reasons for doing so. The imputation, therefore, of a coalition between the Whigs and Conservative republicans, is as ridiculous as it is known to be false in fact. We wooed and courted no party. We made no stipulations. We entered into no arrangements or political combinations. We sought for no pledges of support, either from Sub-Treasury men or Whigs. We presented our candidate as he was, an independent, manly, devoted and able representative of the principles of the State, and then actually doing battle in their defence, with the chivalrous spirit and gallant bearing which became a Virginian senator. We called upon every Virginian, no matter what might be his party, or what had been his political associations, as he valued the ancient and proud character of his State—as he cherished the venerable usages of his ancestors—as he desired to preserve the institutions of the country from destructive innovation—as he wished to control and restrain

the encroachments of Executive supremacy over popular will—as he respected the Conservative principles of senatorial freedom and representative fidelity, to rally to the standard of our virtuous, eloquent and independent senator, Wm. C. Rives.

Many, very many, with noble and patriotic alacrity, responded to the call. It is, we verily believe, because the sentiments and feelings of the people of Virginia were not truly reflected in the Legislature, that there were not more who had ears to hear the call and voices to answer it.

To you fellow-citizens the appeal must now be made. We have too much abiding confidence in the steady adherence to principle, and the noble spirit of freedom which animates the people of the old Dominion, to have the least apprehension as to the manner in which the appeal will be answered. The recollection is too recent of the generous enthusiasm with which you came to the rescue, and restored to the councils of the country this distinguished citizen of genius, eloquence, and virtue you are so justly proud, to permit the least fear that you will abandon him. On that occasion, he was driven from your service because he was maintaining, as you thought, your principles, and faithfully representing your wishes. *Now*, the proofs are positive and irresistible that he is standing upon the ancient and approved principles of the Republicans of Virginia, guarding the public domain from profligate waste, endeavouring to rescue the Treasury from the control of the Executive, and place it under the dominion of the law. Detecting and exposing the first approaches towards a meretricious and illicit intercourse between the Administration and the Bank of the United States, and endeavouring to restrict Executive patronage, and prevent the corrupting tendencies of its improper exercise, and, in a word, fearlessly sustaining all those

measures and principles which, under the administration of Jefferson and Madison, constituted the cardinal doctrines of the Republican creed. Can you be expected to discard him from your service, to place in his stead some complaisant *supporter of the Administration*, who will perchance aid in fastening the odious Sub-Treasury upon the country, who will leave the public money in the hands of the subordinates of the Treasury, and will see millions of it lost in fraud and speculation, permitted by the gross and culpable neglect or incompetency of the heads of the Treasury and its bureaux, with calm composure and unruffled devotion to the Executive? Whatever may have been and still may be your predilections for the Administration, your support is that which liberal and generous masters will extend to faithful servants.

You require of your Representatives a watchful supervision over the Executive Administration. And when it is demanded of you by the parasites and sycophants of the Executive, that you shall expel from your service one of your most faithful and vigilant sentinels, because he is not sufficiently devoted to the President to comply with all his behests, your sentiment, and thrice condemned by the Representatives of the people. [*See Note E.*] He still persists in it, and it has been announced by his *official* organ, that he means to "sink or swim" with it, and been proclaimed by his *financial* organ in the House of Representatives, that this condemned and rejected measure must be submitted to in spite of lamentations in Congress or elsewhere. That this determination is entertained, is still more decisively proved by the fact, that everywhere those who will not abandon their opposition to this measure, no matter how clearly in accordance with the opinions of their constituents, are put under the ban of the party, and the most gross and offensive assaults made upon their sincerity and honour, and the whole power and

influence of the Executive exerted to withdraw the confidence of the people from them.

Recent developments shew, that the most offensive official delinquency and defalcation pervade the public departments, and there is too much reason to fear that this state of things has resulted from great neglect or incompetency in those branches of the public service. They furthermore prove, that there is great reason to apprehend that this condition of things has, in many instances, proceeded from an improper use of the power of removal and abuse of the Executive patronage for party ends: thus demonstrating the necessity for "that reform" which was promised and which is necessary to prevent the patronage of the President from being brought in conflict with the freedom of elections. All these things make us pause in the bestowal of our confidence in the Administration. We cannot pledge ourselves to sink or swim with Martin Van Buren. These clouds must be cleared away and these abuses reformed altogether. We are in this, Conservatives. We desire to preserve the purity and integrity of the Administration of the Government; and if our democratic friends require that we should make no complaint, demand no reform, relinquish all regard to our principles and to the safety of the country, or else be no longer of their party, we can part company with them, without any other regret, than that reply will be, "he has been faithful—he is our friend—the friend of the people—the friend of Republican principles—the champion of Representative freedom—and the President must look elsewhere, than in Virginia, for Senators to do his bidding—to sacrifice the interests of the people in compliance with his wishes, and thus contemn and disregard the known opinions of their constituents."

Fellow citizens, We constitute that portion of the Legislature of Virginia, who have been denominated conservative Republicans, and we desire the principles

of our public action to be distinctly understood. We were supporters of General Jackson's election, and in most of the leading questions of principle, policy, and party action, which occurred during his time, we sustained them and harmonized with the party. We sustained the election of Mr. Van Buren, because we confided in his professions of devotion to the supremacy of the popular will, and of his hostility to those latitudinous constructions of the constitution which the States Right Republican party, of Virginia, had ever condemned, and because, in general, he was pledged to "walk in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor," in endeavouring to prevent the exercise of doubtful and unconstitutional powers by Congress, in limiting and diminishing Executive discretion in regard to the management and safe keeping of the public revenue, in "reforming those abuses which brought the patronage of the Executive in conflict with the freedom of elections," and maintaining the usages and principles of the Republican party. In so far as he does, or shall, answer these expectations, we will sustain him, but we are ready and determined to oppose him in all acts and measures in conflict with these expectations, as firmly and decidedly as if we had never voted for him. We have not been able to shut our eyes to the fact that he has departed from these promises much and widely. He has recommended again and again, a measure opposed and denounced by the whole Republican party in 1834 and 1835, as a departure from the practice of the Government from 1789 down, condemned by public, they, who have always professed to be acting on principle, should have surrendered themselves blindfold, and with passive submission, to approve everything, or at least to make no complaint, no matter what abuses may be disclosed, what corruption may be proved to exist, or what mischief may be perpetrated upon the institutions and liberties of the people. If the whole

creed of the democratic faith is reduced to the single article of a determination to sink or swim with the Executive, we no longer belong to the congregation.

Fellow citizens, We adhere to the ancient and venerable *principles*, as we continue to cherish the ancient patronymic appellation of the Republican party. We are Republicans. We need no new title or addition to designate our political character, though we have no objection to that of Conservatives, which has been reproachfully attached to us. Genuine conservative principles in this country are conservative of the established institutions and long cherished maxims of free Government. They are in perpetual conflict with the restless spirit of destructive innovation which seeks protection and sanction under the guise of some new and popular name, as Danton, Marat and Robespierre perpetrated their atrocious crimes and profanities in the sacred name of liberty and reason. Conservative principles here characterize those who are in favour of maintaining the rights of the States, a strict construction of the constitution of the Federal Government and of restricting and watching with an eye that never closes, the approaches of tyranny from the enlargement of Executive power and patronage. These are our principles. It is these that constitute us Republicans. It is not the name, but the conformity of our practice to our professions. Men may call themselves "Democratic Republicans," or "Democratic States Rights Republicans." They may be re-baptized by every new convention at the instance of every new convert, but if they continue to apologize for abuses, to justify usurpations, to approve every contempt of popular opinion exhibited by the Executive, applaud to the very echo, measures subversive of the usages and principles of Jefferson and Madison, and of the Republican party of 1789 to the present day, and proclaim their determination to sink or swim with the

President, no matter what he has done or may do, they ~~may~~ add title to title, and addition to addition, until their party cognomen is as long as that of a Spanish hidalgo; and after all their real designation, their actual principles and political conduct will be comprehended in the single word, they are *subservatives*.

We will sink or swim with the principles of the Republican party of Virginia; we will sink or swim with the maintenance of the free principles handed down to us by our ancestors; we will sink or swim in the effort to preserve our representatives in congress from executive control and dictation, and will sustain them in manfully resisting the mandates of selfish, mercenary and unprincipled party leaders and scurrilous partizan editors.

These are the leading sentiments which have united us under the designation of Conservative Republicans, and we cannot but believe they are the sentiments of the great body of the enlightened, virtuous and patriotic people of Virginia.

This address was signed by *John T. Anderson*, of Botetourt; *Edmund Fontaine*, of Hanover; *Moses C. Good*, of Ohio Co.; *Joseph H. Sherrard*, of Frederick; *Oscar M. Crutchfield*, of Spottsylvania; *Thomas Shanks*, of Botetourt and Roanoke; *David Barnett*, of Montgomery; *Joseph W. Davis*, of Smyth; *William Shands*, of Prince George; *John O'Farrel*, of Morgan; *George Park*, of Hampshire; *Nathaniel E. Venable*, of Prince George; *Bar. G. Paine*, of Fluvanna; and *William Madison Peyton*, of Roanoke and Botetourt.

Note A.—Since this address was written, a striking illustration of the truth, of this remark has been furnished in the proceedings of a convention of friends of the Administration in the Frederick congressional

district which met for the purpose of nominating a candidate for congress. Mr. James M. Mason, the late member, a uniform State Rights Republican, and a gentleman of fine talents, had differed with the Administration on the Sub-Treasury question; preferring the special deposit plan, which was recommended by Mr. Van Buren, as his second choice. Mr. Mason, in a letter to one of his Constituents, and in an address to the people of his district, both recently published, distinctly avowed his preference for Mr. Van Buren over any of those who have been spoken of as likely to be his competitors for the next Presidency, and declared that, "whether in public or private life," Mr. Van Buren should have his support, "*earnestly and zealously given.*" But this, it seems, was not enough to propitiate the convention. Mr. Mason had disagreed in opinion with them on the Sub-Treasury question, and that disagreement could not be cured by pledges of *earnest and zealous* support of Mr. Van Buren. The objection was fatal, and Mr. Mason was put aside to make room for a *Sub-Treasury* democrat, who received the nomination. "Off with his head! So much for Buckingham!"

W. M. PEYTON.

Note B.—The Editor of the Enquirer, * in his paper of August 18th, 1838, in the exposition of his financial views, reprints and re-asserts the opinions which he expressed in 1834, when the Sub-Treasury scheme was first broached, and when he charged Mr. Leigh with entertaining sentiments favourable to it. The immediate inducement to the expression referred to, was a passage in a letter written by Mr. Leigh in reply to one addressed by 26 citizens of Richmond. A short extract from his very lengthy strictures will be sufficient to show his opinions as the organ of the Republican party at that day, and to establish their

* The well known Thomas Ritchie

identity with the opinions maintained by Mr. Rives and the Conservatives at present.

"As to the letter of Mr. Leigh," he says, "it may satisfy his twenty-six friends; but it certainly does not satisfy us. The letter which they have called forth, should call forth in its turn, another letter to explain" the true meaning of that passage "which speaks" of divorcing all connection with banks, State or Federal. "Do you mean (they might say) that the public money is to be left in the hands of the Custom-house officers, *responsible* to the President and removable by him?—If so, is Mr. Leigh prepared to incur the irresistible objections urged by the globe—and to increase (in so alarming a degree) the patronage, power and influence of the Executive?"

Mr. Ritchie was a faithful exponent of the sentiments of the Republican party at that day, and it would seem that they were at least opposed to a divorce of the Government from the State Banks.

In his paper four days afterwards, August 22, in some remarks addressed to two of his correspondents, "*Attalus*" and "*Another Democrat*," he says, they are not probably aware of the extent to which this discussion on the Sub-Treasury had been carried three years before, in 1834. "They may not recollect that their system of Sub-Treasuries was advocated by the Whigs three years ago, and that the Republicans then resisted the proposition. If then we advocate a heresy now, it was the heresy of the Republicans in 1834. If it be our thunder now, it was our thunder, and what is more important, *their* thunder *then*. * * * He, "*Attalus*," forgets that at every era when a National Bank came into discussion, it was held not to be necessary, because the State Banks furnished a sufficient resource. Messrs. Madison, Jackson, and Stone suggested their use in 1791, Messrs. Burwell, Seybert, P. B. Porter and Wright of M., recommended them in 1811. They all concurred in the sentiment of Mr. Wright, that "the

State Banks are abundantly sufficient to supply every requisition, if the U. S. deposits are made in them." Not a word from any of these orators about an Independent Sub-Treasury system ! The same ground was taken when the second U. S. Bank was put down ; and when the debate came on upon the removal of the deposits, the same ground was taken by the Republican party, when, also, the substitute of the Sub-Treasuries was pressed by Mr. Gordon it received the vote of but one Republican member of the House of Representatives. * * * The Republican press of that day took up Mr. Leigh's speech and denounced the scheme of resorting to treasurers, appointed by the President, and removable at his will, and having the public money in their actual possession, "*in their pockets, desks, trunks, and vaults.*" They contended that the present system of deposits for the public money, regulated by law, as it will be, is as good for safety and the least liable to abuse by the Executive, of any which the wit of man can conceive ; and declared "*that the power now exercised over the State Banks is only such as has been exercised by the Administrations of Washington, the Adamises, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe,* but if Congress can be induced to impose upon it new and wholesome restrictions, General Jackson will glory in it as another of the happy fruits of his harassed, but for himself and his country, most fortunate Administration." And yet, says Mr. Ritchie, we are to give up this system *now* without any imperious necessity, and fly to the system proposed by the Whigs, and opposed by the staunchest Republicans in 1834 !

We will merely add, without comment, a few more extracts from the *Enquirer*, as we are anxious to derive the full benefit of its potential influence in this appeal to our Republican brethren.

FROM THE "ENQUIRER."

September 8th, 1837.—How is it that the great masses of the two parties seem to be respectively shifting the grounds they occupied in '34—the friends of the Administration violently assailed it—most of the Republicans, with the President at their head, are inclined to support it. A better soldier than ourselves then gave forth the most serious objections to the scheme.

The public moneys, from the time of their receipt to the time of their disbursement, amounting as they often do, to ten or twelve millions of dollars, must remain in the hands of individuals *appointed by the President and removable at his will!* They ought not to be kept in their pockets, chests or vaults, where they can approach it every day and use it, without the checks of warrants drawn, countersigned, registered and recorded, and passing through many hands, without which (that is their warrants) not a dollar can now be touched by any public officer, not even the President himself."

We have no desire to see such accumulation of power in the hands of the Executive—no wish to put the money directly into the palms of his friends and partizans. We wish to see the power and patronage of the Executive increased as little as possible—the powers of the Federal government not enlarged—the purse and sword not more strongly united, than they are in the hands of the President, and as few means of corruption as possible trusted in his possession.

FROM THE SAME.

September 15th, 1837.—He designates it as "a wild and dangerous scheme" establishing two sorts of currency—the better for the officers of the government, the baser one for the people.

October 20th, 1837.—He says the Sub-Treasury will enlarge the Executive power, already too great for a Republic. In the same paper, speaking of the special deposit, he says, “such is the compromise we beg leave to submit to all the friends of a limited Executive and a guarded exchequer.”

January 20th, 1838.—Speaking of the change made in the bill from extra session to the session in December, and of the rapid growth of Executive patronage, which would follow the adoption of the measure, he says: “It has already expanded from collectors to receivers and who shall say that it shall not expand from four receivers to 20 or 50. In fact who shall stop the augmentation of tax receivers under the Administration of some future ambitious President? The bill increases the Executive patronage by the appointment of Receivers Generals, Bank Commissioners, and places the public funds more immediately under the control of officers appointed by and removable by the President.”

In another editorial of the 12th September, (date omitted,) alluding to the premium the merchant must pay to obtain specie for his duty bonds, he says: “who pays all these expenses? The people—for, let the merchants, for instance, pay their bonds in specie, they will ultimately receive it in the advances on their goods. A tax, then, to all intents and purposes, is laid on the people at large, to the amount of the premium on specie, and it goes into the pockets of every man who feeds from the public crib.”

Note C.—On the 4th of May, 1830, a select committee, raised at the instance of Hon. Thomas H. Benton, on the subject of Executive patronage, of which he was chairman, and Mr. Van Buren with other distinguished gentlemen of the Jackson party, were members, reported their views at length to the senate of the United States. They represented, with a pencil of

light, the inherent tendency of patronage to increase—its insidious approaches—its almost seductive and resistless influences, and its overpowering energy, when it has once acquired the ascendant. We must look forward, say they, to the time (that period is now arrived) when the public revenue will be doubled; when the civil and military officers of the Federal Government will be quadrupled; when the influence over individuals will be multiplied to an indefinite extent; when the nomination by the President can carry any man through the senate, and his *recommendation* carry any measure through the two Houses of Congress; when the principle of public action will be open and avowed, *the President wants my vote and I want his patronage*. I will vote as he wishes and he will give me the office I wish for. What will this be but the government of one man? And what is the government of one man but a monarchy? Names are nothing. The nature of a thing is in its substance, and the name soon accommodates itself to the substance. The first Roman Emperor was styled “Emperor of the Republic,” and the last French Emperor took the same title, and their respective countries were just as essentially monarchical before as after the assumption of them. It cannot be denied or dissembled, that the Federal Government gravitates to the same point, and that the election of the executive by the Legislature quickens the impulsion. “Those who make the President, must support him. Their political fate becomes identified, and they must stand or fall together. Right or wrong they must support him.”

What would the authors of these truly patriotic and Republican sentiments have thought of that political servility which openly and unblushingly inculcates a “sink or swim” policy? How would these slavish doctrines square with their Republicanism, as laid down in this report? If Colonel Benton and Mr. Van Buren were sincere and honest in this solemn expression of

their sentiments, they would be compelled by their principles, to repudiate, with as much scorn and indignation as any Conservative, this degrading oath of fealty to a party chief, this unscrupulous endorsement in advance of opinions and conduct which cannot be foreseen or anticipated, this odious and unmanly submission to the capricious and despotic exactions of party. If sincere, their patriotic apprehensions for the perpetuity of our institutions would have been greatly excited and they would have made the very walls of the capitol tremble with the thunder of their denunciations. They would have told us that the prophecy and its fulfilment were contemporaneous; that our Government was a monarchy *now*. Is there nothing at this day to make us fear that our Government gravitates to monarchy? If the recommendations of the President can carry this Sub-Treasury measure through the two Houses of Congress, stamped as it has been by the reprobation of almost all men of all parties, throughout our extensive dominion, and receiving especially the almost unanimous reprobation of that party now advocating it, what cannot the President do, under this vassal doctrine of blind and indiscriminate support?

Note D.—When Mr. Roane was elected to the U. States senate, the vote in the House of Delegates, so far as the Whig party was concerned, was for Roane 24, against him and for Judge Daniel 16, with some few scattering. In the senate, for Roane 5 Whigs, against him 2. So that he received the votes of 29, and his competitor those of 18 only. Without the Whigs, Mr. Roane would not, and could not, possibly have been elected. [*Note to Mr. Pendleton's speech*].

At the dinner which was given to Mr. Rives in the City of Richmond, after the close of the session of Congress, and very shortly after the election of Mr.

Roane, Mr. Rives in responding to a complimentary toast, took occasion to vindicate the principles of that currency bill, which is now so much the subject of obloquy among those very gentlemen who, at the time, were paying the homage of heart-felt gratitude for his distinguished services, and lavishing the most extravagant encomiums upon his republican virtues. Not a discordant note in this numerous assemblage, disturbed the harmonious greeting and joyous gratulations which animated them. It also becomes worthy of remark on this occasion, as Mr. Rives is assailed and condemned by many of Mr. Roane's political friends for not repudiating the aid of the Whigs in the late senatorial election, that Mr. Roane, who, it seems, was obnoxious, in the estimation of some, to a similar objection, in the course of a speech which he made at the same dinner, with a correctness of judgment and feeling, alike creditable to his head and his heart, repelled this new idea of contamination in Whig support. Among many other just and forcible remarks, he said, "Let us never forget that our adversaries are 'bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh,' that they are our friends, our neighbours and our countrymen." To those who press this objection to Mr. Rives, we would commend the old adage, "ye who live in glass houses should not throw stones at your neighbours' windows."

Note E.—The official organ of General Jackson (the *Globe*) in 1835, shortly after the Sub-Treasury scheme was broached, and when it was alone countenanced by a few ultra whigs, assailed it in the most violent terms, as a measure fraught with mischief, and threatening our liberties. It asserted "that it would enlarge Executive power by putting in its hands the means of corruption." "That it would transfer the money directly into the palms of Executive agents, the friends and partizans of the President, instead of its being kept on deposit in

banks, whence it could not be drawn for other than public purposes, without certain detection, and thus exposing it to be plundered by a *hundred* hands, where *one* cannot now reach it. "*Sed tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*"

"Men change with fortune, manners change with climes,
Tenets with books, and principles with times."

W. M. PEYTON.

On the reassembling of the Legislature, Mr. Rives was elected and took his seat in Congress. On the 14th of the following January, he delivered his able speech on the Fiscal arrangements of the Government with the United States Bank, and reviewing the annual report of the Secretary of the Treasury.

CHAPTER VII.

YIELDING to numerous and urgent importunities, Colonel Peyton consented to become a candidate, the following Spring of 1838, for the House of Delegates for Roanoke and Botetourt, and was elected without opposition. At this time he did not seek for, nor despise, honours. Shortly after the meeting of the Legislature, the subject of internal improvements came up for consideration. On all sides the question excited the liveliest interest. The delegates for Eastern Virginia were as hostile as formerly to a general tax for what they sophistically termed local improvements, and under the leadership of Messrs. Yerby, Edmunds, Venable, and others, marshalled their forces in a solid phalanx. On the other hand the western delegates were equally determined to carry their point, and were led by the young and eloquent delegates for Roanoke and Botetourt, Augusta, Montgomery, and Kenawah,—Peyton, A. H. H. Stuart, W. B. Preston, and George W. Summers.

To understand this question it should be remarked,

that the Virginia of 1838 extended from the Atlantic to the Ohio, a length of 425 miles, and north and south from Pennsylvania to North Carolina and Tennessee, a distance of about 210 miles. Its area was 61,352 square miles, being considerably more than that of England. With the exception of Pennsylvania, Virginia was the only State which extended across the great Appalachian chain. The State was traversed from north to south by several other well-defined mountain ranges, among them the Blue-ridge and the North mountain, which is an extension of the Kittatinny mountain of Pennsylvania. These mountains are pierced by numerous rivers, some flowing east to the Atlantic and others west, emptying into the Ohio and Gulf of Mexico. The principal rivers which rise in the great valley between the Blue-ridge and Alleghanies, and find their way to the Atlantic, are the Potomac, the James, and the Staunton; and those which rise east of the Blue-ridge and run in the same general direction, are the Rappahannock, which is navigable 110 miles above its mouth in the Chesapeake bay to Fredericksburg—the York river, formed by the confluence of the Mattaponi and Pamunkey, each a hundred miles long, and is navigable about forty miles from its mouth—the Blackwater, Nottoway, and Meherrin, which, like the Staunton, find their way to the ocean through North Carolina. The principal rivers flowing west, and emptying ultimately into the gulf of Mexico, are the Ohio, the great Kenawha, which rises in the valley between the Blue ridge and Alleghanies, the Monongehela, the

Guyandot, the little Kenawha, and the Big-Sandy. From this brief description of the direction of the waters, it is seen that the State rises from the Atlantic to the mountains, and there slopes down to the Ohio. Divided into four natural parts, it was also formed into four political divisions. The first of these was the *Tide-water* district, lying east of the lower falls of the rivers, and consisting for the most part of a flat country nowhere more than sixty feet above the sea. Further west is the *Piedmont* district, extending as far as the Blue-ridge. This is more elevated and diversified in its surface than the former, as it is traversed by a range of hills parallel to the Blue-ridge, and about 30 miles from it. The *Valley* district extends from the Blue-ridge to the most westernly ridge of the Alleghany mountains; and is occupied by various chains of these mountains, and the fertile vallies that lie among them. The extreme west of the State is occupied by the *Trans-Alleghany* district, which slopes westward and is occupied by various branches and offsets of the mountains. In a country of such extent, and with such physical peculiarities and divisions, it is not surprising that different and antagonistic local interests arose. Nature supplied with noble rivers that portion of the State comprised in the *Tide-water* district, and lying upon the Atlantic and the Chesapeak bay, which is sometimes styled the American Mediterranean. By these the inhabitants enjoyed every facility for sending to the markets of the world the products of their lands. The soil, too, of this district is light and sandy, and after

rain soon becomes firm and dry, hence little labour or money is required to keep the roads in repair. The people of eastern Virginia therefore asked nothing on the score of improvements, nor did they wish to contribute from the common treasury towards the improvement of less favoured districts. In support of this ungenerous and illiberal policy they adduced a variety of arguments, some of them not without considerable plausibility, but all really unsound. The western people, who lived above the falls of the rivers, where the streams were too small for navigation, and where the soil is clayey and the roads in winter impassible, asked, as their means were unequal to the expense, that the State should undertake to lock and dam the principal rivers, cut canals where required, and construct leading roads which were necessary for the development of the country and for its defence. They argued that the increase in population, the augmentation in the wealth, the multiplication in the subjects of taxation which would result from such a system of improvement, would redound in the end to the prosperity of the whole State, thus benefitting the *Tide-water* population. Thus was the issue made up by the two parties, and on this question delegates were elected from all parts of the State.

In this particular House of Delegates the party of the west was led, as previously mentioned, by (with others) the subject of this biography; and on the 15th and 16th days of February, 1839, he delivered the following speech of great force and eloquence in the

General Assembly on behalf of a general scheme of State improvement.

SUBSTANCE OF THE REMARKS
OF
COLONEL WILLIAM MADISON PEYTON,
(OF BOTETOURT),
IN SUPPORT OF THE REPORT AND RESOLUTIONS RECOMMENDING A SCHEME OF INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT ; *
IN THE
HOUSE OF DELEGATES OF VIRGINIA, FEBRUARY 15, 1838.

The Internal Improvement Report being called up,

Colonel PEYTON remarked, That the late hour at which the Report of the Committee on Roads and Internal Navigation had been called up, together with the protracted discussion which it had already excited, made it proper he should inform the House that he did not expect to trespass long upon their patience. That he would endeavour to avoid detail and unnecessary digression, as much as possible, and confine himself strictly to the great leading principles which were involved. He assured the House that he would not wander into the regions of imagination, in quest of the roses and garlands of fancy, to embellish his sentiments. He would neither stoop on the one side to cull a flower, nor on the other to collect a gem ; but would proceed directly to the development of his views as succinctly as the nature of the subject would allow.

* This speech was published in Richmond, in 1838, by Shepperd and Collins.

Colonel Peyton said he did not participate in the surprise of the friends of the Report at the violent opposition which it had encountered. He thought it was to have been expected, however strong might have been the evidences in favour of its adoption. In a numerous body like this, representing a territory so extensive, and embracing interests so varied, he said it was to be expected that local considerations would influence the course of some gentlemen, while others, operated upon by an over-timid and over-cautious policy, would be found arrayed against it, solely on the ground of its novelty and apparent magnitude; and some few, perhaps, might find an excuse for their hostility in the extraordinary reason assigned by the gentleman from Prince Edward (Mr. Venable) a few days since: that the adoption of the proposed scheme would defeat the improvement of the State. But, said Colonel Peyton, notwithstanding the combination of all these adverse impulses, I believe there is an enlightened spirit awakened in the land, which cannot be repressed or fettered, but which, bursting through all the barriers of ignorance, is rapidly diffusing its regenerating influences and giving a healthy tone to public opinion. The ball, said Colonel Peyton, is in motion, receiving its impetus from the lofty summits of our mountains. He trusted it had already gathered sufficient velocity and power to overcome and defy all opposition. He said that the difficulties which beset the friends of improvement at the threshold of their innovation upon the established policy, of the State, ought not to dishearten them—that it was not reasonable to expect so radical and important a change of State policy would be acquiesced in without a severe struggle; and that the history of all our sister States, which have adopted an enlightened and liberal system of internal improvement, exhibits a perfect identity in all the circumstances.

attending its introduction. And here, said Colonel Peyton, we find the same arguments relied upon by gentlemen, which were urged upon the legislature of New York, when it was proposed to construct the Erie and Hudson Canal on State account. And notwithstanding the obvious necessity and utility of ~~that~~ great work, and notwithstanding it was recommended and advocated by one of her most distinguished sons, by one upon whom nature had profusely scattered the rays of genius and the inspiration of intellect, by ~~the~~ then reputed theorist, but now revered sage, De Witt Clinton. I repeat, said Colonel Peyton, that notwithstanding it was brought forward under the auspices of this gifted individual, and sustained with all his zeal, and all his ability, and all his influence, it was with the utmost difficulty pressed through the legislature. And when its adoption was promulgated through the country, it produced an excitement so violent and uncompromising in its character, as to threaten with political ostracism all those who had taken a prominent part in its support. In the commotion, said Colonel Peyton, the dregs all floated to the surface. Whip syllabub lawyers and artful demagogues sprung up like mushrooms in every quarter of the State, and called upon the "*dear people*" to hold fast their purse strings. They represented the legislature, said Colonel Peyton, as adopting some monstrous Briarean scheme, which would stretch forth its hundred arms and plunge its hundred hands into the breeches pockets of the people, and plunder them of the hard earnings of their daily labour, to make, in the cant phrase of these most *special friends* of the "*dear people*," "the rich richer, and the poor poorer." The psuedo political economists, too, said Colonel Peyton, of whom there is always an over supply in every community, and especially in every political association, fortified in their own estimation by some absurd and incongruous

dogmas of a science, the true principles of which lay greatly beyond the reach of their intellectual visions, urged that the State, possessing no funds, having no hoard, nor any certain or ascertained, or even conjectural resources, other than those anticipated from the projected works, had no right to construct a work at the expense of the whole community, which was partial in its benefits. That it was oppressing and desolating one portion of the State to confer blessings upon another. To these pseudo political economists, there came, said Colonel Peyton, as auxiliaries in this war against liberal legislation, the pseudo philanthropists, a class who, more anxious for the welfare of the the "unborn millions" who are to follow them, than for the generation to which they themselves belong, insisted that we had no right to transmit these debts, incurred for public works, to posterity, as it was imposing a burthen upon them in which they had no voice or agency, and over which they could not by possibility have exercised any control. And I have no doubt, said Colonel Peyton, that these philanthropic worthies, in their learned dissertations at the corners of the village streets, and at the cross roads and grog-shops of the country, gravely argued that it was a gross violation of the great fundamental principles of our Government, that it was neither more nor less than taxation without representation. Such, he said, were a specimen, of the miserable *batch*, or, said he, to borrow from high authority a more appropriate expression, the miserable rabble of objections which were urged against the enlightened policy of the empire State. Such, said Colonel Peyton, were the obstacles that were thrown in the way of the steady, conestoga, onward march of the miscalled Bæotia of this confederacy, in a system which is every day illustrating the energy and wisdom and patriotism of its legislation by the solid wealth and substantial

blessings which it is conferring upon its citizens. And such, I need not tell you, Mr. Speaker, after what you have heard on this floor, are the cogent arguments, the mighty missiles with which we are assailed, and which renders it necessary that the friends of internal improvement should put on their armour and invoke the Protecting Egis of Minerva. Survey, said Colonel Peyton, the whole ground which has been occupied by the opponents of our scheme, and analyze what they have said, and you will find it all at last resolved into some one of the objections which I have enumerated, or into something which bears a strong family likeness to them. And, said Colonel Peyton, I must say, they are only dignified on the present occasion, by their very respectable endorsement, and the talents which they have enlisted in their support.

The talented representatives from Prince Edward and Halifax predicated the greater portion of their arguments upon the assumption, that the State was, from its poverty, unable to construct the improvements recommended in the report. The financial estimate presented by the gentlemen from Augusta, a few days since, in his exposition of the views of the committee, Colonel Peyton thought entirely conclusive upon this point, and he had heard nothing as yet, in the slightest degree calculated to weaken his confidence in it. The objection to the calculation, in the estimation of Colonel Peyton, was, that it yielded too much to his opponents, and did greater injustice to the financial resources of the Commonwealth. But, said Colonel Peyton, notwithstanding this estimate, which proves beyond doubt the entire ability of the State to accomplish the improvements proposed without abstracting one cent from the pockets of the community, we are told by the intelligent gentleman from Halifax, that they will create a national debt, which will result in national bankruptcy. This idea, monstrous,

illusory, and unfounded as it is, in the face, too, of the most irrefragable testimony of figures which cannot lie, is reiterated and echoed by the opponents of this measure from every part of the hall, as though it was a species of axiom. That the estimate is based on facts, purely legitimate, and that its foundations are firmly fixed in truth, the abortive efforts of our opponents to impugn and destroy them, afford the highest evidence. That all the antagonist items which are entitled to be considered as offsets or charges upon the internal improvement fund, are fairly and properly stated, is not denied; but it is pretended that the estimate of the profits upon the works in process of execution, and upon those contemplated, is extravagant. Gentlemen, said Colonel Peyton, wiser and more experienced than our engineers, who are generally presumed to be the best acquainted with these matters, and wiser and more astute than that numerous and intelligent class of the community who have vested their money in many of these schemes, after a close scrutiny into the chances of reimbursement, have come to the conclusion, that they are all visionary speculations, and doomed to disappoint and ruin those who engage in them. It is true, said Colonel Peyton, as has been said by the anti-improvement gentlemen, that considerable reliance is placed upon the anticipated profits from the James River improvement. And this estimate being conjectural, he knew of no better mode of approximating the truth, than by consulting those who have embarked their fortunes in it, and whose interests have led them to examine it narrowly. The testimony of all these, he said, would more than sustain the humble estimate. If, said Colonel Peyton, the matured wisdom of a Marshall in the east, and the cool, calculating, practical good sense of a Breckenridge in the west, and the combined intelligence of the most enlightened portions of the State, after a long, and anxious, and

thorough investigation of the utility and productiveness of this work, could cheerfully embark all their available means in it, and appeal, in all the sincerity of a burning patriotism to their fellow-citizens to unite in its construction, I think we may safely rest with this assembly the very humble estimate which we have placed upon its productiveness, upon this authority, in opposition to the round and unsustained assertions of the gentlemen from Prince Edward and Halifax. Colonel Peyton said, that he should therefore claim with confidence that the calculation of the profits from this work, which had been used in the financial estimate, and which was confessedly so far below the estimates of persons so eminently qualified; should be received, until some stronger argument than the empty denunciations of an enemy, or the bold assertions of inexperience were offered.

Colonel Peyton said, that the only other conjectural source of revenue relied upon, is the contemplated improvements, and these but for a very limited amount and for a short period. He said, that the gentleman from Halifax, in combating this source of revenue, instead of dissecting, and sifting, and exposing the extravagance of the very moderate and guarded estimate which we presented, launched forth into a denunciatory attack upon the report of the principal engineer, in which the estimates were more than ten times higher than we claimed; and having in the blindness of his zeal imagined that he had utterly demolished the engineer's report, he very gravely and most logically concluded, that our estimate, by consequence, shared the same fate. He said, that feeling disposed to admit a paralogism so palpable, he felt authorized, by the failure of the gentleman, to object specifically to the dividend claimed by the friends of the report, in construing it into an admission of its correctness. But this, he said, was unnecessary. To

those, said Colonel Peyton, who are familiar with the trade and travel of that section of the State, which will be accommodated by the South-western road, and with the powerful auxiliaries which it will receive when extended to Knoxville, not only the extreme moderation of our estimate will be manifest, but the much derided and apparently extravagant calculation of our chief engineer will be found, upon examination, to be entirely within the bounds of probability. Fortunately, said Colonel Peyton, we were not driven upon the fanciful speculations of its ardent friends for the maintenance of our opinions. In the year 1831, a convention was held in the town of Abingdon, composed of delegates from the city of Richmond, and all the intermediate country to Knoxville, in Tennessee, who, after carefully collating all the facts necessary in enabling them to determine whether the tonnage and travel of this route would justify the expense of a railroad, decided most confidently in its favour. From the report of their proceedings it appeared that even then the tonnage transported by waggons amounted to 7,297 imports, and 60,352 exports, making an aggregate of 67,649 tons; calculating the imports at 6 cents per mile, and the exports at 3 cents, it gave nearly five hundred thousand dollars. They then deducted one-third from this amount to cover the error in the calculation from some of the exports and a large portion of the imports being distributed along the line, instead of being carried the whole way through. This left for imports 64,798 dols., for exports 267,963 dols., making an aggregate of 332,761 dols., which, taking the cost of the railroad from New River to Knoxville at 3,108,000 dols., would produce a dividend of upwards of 10 per cent on the cost of that part of the road from New River to Knoxville, or nearly $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on 4,408,000 dols., the total cost of constructing a railroad from Lynchbury to Knoxville. In this calculation,

the tolls accruing upon that portion of the line between New River and Lynchburg, and which would unquestionably be the most productive, are excluded. Nevertheless the convention had no hesitation in saying, upon the very meagre information which they possessed, that this section would yield at least 10 per cent. to the stockholders in the then condition of the trade of the country. And this, too, it will be observed, without relying upon the profit to be derived from the transportation of passengers, which of itself, I have no doubt, is justly considered by our chief engineer as the most valuable source of revenue. Colonel Peyton said, that in addition to the facts elicited by this convention, there was a most important one derived from the register kept at Inglis's ferry, on New River, in the year 1836. From this, it appeared that between thirty-four and thirty-five thousand travellers crossed at that single point during the year. These, said Colonel Peyton, together with those who crossed at the numerous fords and ferries above and below, would probably swell the estimate to between 40 and 50,000. This travel at the ordinary charge of six cents per mile, would give an income of 576,000 dols., or between 18 and 20 per cent. on the whole cost of construction. Thus showing the ability of this improvement to sustain itself by a moderate toll upon the travel, and consequently, removing the necessity of heavy imports upon the agricultural and mineral products of the country.

But, said Colonel Peyton, when you recollect that the moment you construct this work, and thus remove the *mountain* barriers which separate this country from market, you at once awaken the industry and stimulate the energies of its inhabitants, and that you develop the varied and inexhaustible mineral and agricultural resources of one of the fairest and most salubrious

portions of the State — a region where lead, salt, gypsum, coal, iron, and an exuberant fertility of soil have been lavished with almost prodigal profusion. It is impossible, said he, to conceive the width and depth of the stream enriched from all these prolific sources, which will pour its golden flood upon our commercial marts, exciting their enterprize, and re-invigorating their languishing commerce. Not only this, said Col. Peyton, but when the work shall have been extended to Knoxville, a short distance beyond our South-Western border, it will constitute the *focus* of improvements, radiating to the Atlantic on the one side, the Ohio on the other, and the Gulf of Mexico on the third—embracing within its influence two-thirds of the confederacy, and drawing within its vortex, by the sure attraction of its being the nearest, most natural, and direct route to the east, the largest commerce ever enjoyed by a railroad, and an amount of travel beyond the anticipations of the most sanguine and credulous. But, said Colonel Peyton, I will not fatigue myself, or waste the time of the House in proving the value and productiveness of a work against which not a single plausible argument has been offered. The ingenious gentleman from Halifax, himself finding that a closer scrutiny into our estimate of the profits from the James River and Kenawha improvements and the South-western road, was more likely to prejudice than to promote his cause, seemed to yield the point, and shaking the dust of the old Dominion from his feet; he embarked upon the railroads and canals of the great States of Pennsylvania and New York, in quest of facts to support his theory. There, said Colonel Peyton, entrenching himself behind a rampart of reports and imposing arithmetical calculations, he seemed to defy and almost deride his opponents. Let us, said Colonel Peyton, examine him in his new position, and see whether it will not yield to the first

assault. To say nothing at present, said Colonel Peyton, of the numerous errors of fact and inference in which the gentleman involved himself at every step, there was one prominent and striking and radical defeat in his whole argument, and that was, said Colonel Peyton, his neglect of the ameliorating influences of these improvements upon the comfort and happiness and pecuniary circumstances of the inhabitants of the States penetrated by them. He seemed, said Colonel Peyton, to lose sight altogether of the immense enhancements of individual property which resulted from them, and the consequent increase of the stream of taxes which would be annually pouring its golden treasures with a continually increasing volume into the public coffers. Not only this, but he seemed to be blind—yes, stone blind—to the incalculable addition to the aggregate of national wealth from the development of the rich mineral treasures locked up in inaccessible mountains, and which, without these improvements, were utterly valueless. He seemed to forget, too, the extensive manufactories which would grow out of the working of these mines and cluster around every waterfall in their neighbourhood. He overlooked, too, the immense augmentation of agricultural products which the stimulus of a ready market would create. And still more, said Colonel Peyton, he excluded from view the increase of population resulting from the combination of all these other blessings—an increase only limited by our mines of coal and iron, which are said to be boundless and inexhaustible. Great, manifold, and important, said Colonel Peyton, as are these, the legitimate offspring of a judicious system of internal improvement, embracing as they do all the important elements and essentials which constitute a prosperous and happy people, under the benign influence of free institutions, and which in my opinion ought to be cherished as a blessing, even

if it was coupled with a system of direct taxation for the reimbursement of the debt incurred in producing it. Great, manifold and important, repeated Colonel Peyton, as were all these beneficial results from an improvement of the means of inter-communication, the gentleman never once adverted to them, but confined himself to a cold stock-jobbing calculation of the dividends accruing from the various works finished and contemplated. Is this, said Colonel Peyton, the view of a Statesman? Is it the voice of patriotism? Or is it the barking of a treasury watchdog, a Cerberus chained at the mouth of the vaults, and with brute instinct denying access to all persons indiscriminately, without respect to the character of the claim or the applicant. Is it possible, said Colonel Peyton, that a policy so narrow and so contracted, so miserably parsimonious and so obviously suicidal, is to be countenanced and sustained by the representatives of a generous and magnanimous people. But said Colonel Peyton, my feelings have hurried me into a degression from the point in my argument to which I had arrived, and upon which I wish to bring the attention of the house to bear for a few moments.

I was about to admit, for the sake of argument, and for the purpose of exhibiting in a still stronger point of view, the indefensible character of the position assumed by the gentleman from Halifax, that all the ameliorating influences of these improvements upon society—the increase of population—the augmentation of agricultural products—the development of mineral treasures—the creation of manufactories and the increase of the public revenue—that all these should be discarded from consideration, and that we should view it simply as a money-making, stock-jobbing scheme on the part of the State. Even, said Colonel Peyton, in this narrow and contracted and unstatesmanlike point of view, if the lessons of experience are suffered to shed

their broad and full light upon the question, there will be no difficulty in maintaining before this Assembly the policy of the system. I am willing, he said, to narrow the ground on which we stand, for the present, still more, by permitting its correctness to be tested by the Pennsylvania system, which has been so frequently referred to and so confidently relied upon by the opponents of improvement, as affording the strongest testimony in their favour. I am fully aware, said the Colonel, that I place myself in the most disadvantageous position in relinquishing the mass of testimony which the triumphant success of the State system in other parts of the Union affords, and submitting the question to a test, selected by our enemies, and which wants the analogy which is necessary to give weight to the deductions against us. Those who are acquainted with the history of internal improvements in the State of Pennsylvania, know that it was commenced under every disadvantage, at a time when the construction of canals and railways were not well understood in this country, and when, from the want of that skill, and experience, and knowledge which she now possesses, she expended at least one-fourth, or six millions more, according to the estimates of her most practical men, than would be necessary to do the same work now. There is another circumstance, said Col. Peyton, which weakens the parallel. An inspection of the map will satisfy every one acquainted with the geography of the United States, that in point of natural advantages, she cannot compare with us. By position, she commands the commerce of no State but her own, whilst Virginia, from the nature of the Carolina coast, is the natural market of Carolina products, and from her position, possesses advantages over Pennsylvania, in a competition for the Ohio trade, and superadded to this, the rich products of East

Tennessee and North Alabama flow as certainly to her ports as she provides an outlet for them. But, notwithstanding all this, he hoped he would be able to satisfy the House in a few words, that the system of Pennsylvania, prompt, bold, expanded, and in one sense, extravagant as it had been, so far from presenting a picture to discourage and dishearten the friends of improvement, offered every inducement and stimulus to increased exertion. In looking into the Pennsylvania system to ascertain whether the funds she has invested in public works have been squandered or judiciously expended, it certainly affords no evidence against them to find, that upon an expenditure of nearly 25,000,000 dols., they received during the past year of paralysis and commercial pressure, only 975,350,49 dols. The general plan is not yet carried out, many important links are unfinished, which, when completed, will swell the tonnage immensely. The energy, and industry, and enterprize of the community has scarcely had time to get under way. The mineral and agricultural resources are just developing themselves; so that the present tolls, handsome as they are, scarcely afford an earnest of what they will be, when the system is complete, and has had sufficient time to work out its great results. Equally unsatisfactory is any argument drawn from the statistics of detached works. There are so many circumstances connected with them, special and peculiar in their character, and of which we are ignorant, that no general arrangement can be drawn from them upon this point, entitled to the slightest consideration. Instead, therefore, of suffering ourselves to be carried away by the bold assertions of gentlemen or specious deductions from particular improvements, and sections of improvements, of which we know nothing, or the *jaundiced* calculations of the profits of a system which is imperfect and unfinished, I would refer you to the testimony of the citizens of Pennsylv^{ia}

vania themselves—to the report of the canal commissioners, who are entrusted with the control and management of the public works, and who are familiar with the influences, favourable and unfavourable, which operate upon them—to the message of the governor, who exercises a supervisory care over the whole State, and who derives his information from the best sources. Do you find their opinions of the value and productiveness of the public works according with those deduced by the gentlemen from Prince Edward and Halifax, from their *selected* statistics? Do you find them deploring the system as one leading to national bankruptcy? No they are proud of it, and cherish it as a never-failing source of the richest blessings; as the broad basis of individual wealth and national grandeur; as the key-stone which crowns their political edifice, giving strength and durability and finish to the structure. Colonel Peyton said, in the report of the canal commissioners for the year 1837, they say, “one aspect of the operations of the year must, however, prove cheering to every Pennsylvanian. While the revenue derived from similar great State improvements, all around us, has materially fallen short of last year, ours has advanced in a ratio corresponding with that of former years. If we can thus maintain our career in the midst of such untoward circumstances, what mind can estimate the effects that will be produced by the return of a more healthy policy. If, in connexion with this view of the subject, the competition of the improvements now in progress, and which will effectually bring into use the immense mineral productions of the Lykens valley, Shamokin, Mahamy, Wyoming, and the bituminous coal and iron fields of the west branch and Juniata, be also contemplated, the result is incalculable. But little now passes on the canals of the Susquehanna, its branches and the Juniata. When,